

**The Two Golden Ages of  
Tamil Nadu  
and the Current Dark Days  
(Tamil Nadu History and Current Events)**



**Thanjai Nalankilli**

# **The Two Golden Ages of Tamil Nadu and the Current Dark Days**

## **(Tamil Nadu History and Current Events)**

by  
**Thanjai Nalankilli**

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First edition 2019  
Second edition 2023

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# **1.**

## **Introduction**

We have written history of Tamil Nadu for only about 2000 years, starting with the final years of the Third Tamil Academy (Third Tamil Sangam). Historians talk of two Golden Ages (Golden Eras) of Tamil Nadu. The first golden age is about 2000 years ago, during the days of the Third Tamil Academy. The second golden age is about 1000 years ago, in the heydays of Imperial Chola dynasty. When will be the Third Golden Age? We do not know but we may call the current period the Dark Days of Tamil Nadu.

We will first discuss briefly the first two golden ages. Then we will discuss the current dark period (starting from about 1333) in which Tamil Nadu, Tamil people and Tamil language have lost their past glory.

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## **2. Early history**

Although the history of Tamil Nadu is long, we have only about 2000 years of written history available to us. Oldest text available to us is Tholkaappiam. It is estimated that it might have been written a little over 2000 years ago; there are scholars who estimate a little more and some who estimate a little less. It is a Tamil grammar book, not a history book. Some stanzas in the book indicate that there were older grammar texts. That means there were many older literary works also because there would be no grammar books like Tholkaappiam if there were no literary works. If there were Tamil grammar and literary works before 2000 years, Tamil people must have an established civilization. But we do not have any information about their government or kings until the days of the Third Tamil Academy, approximately 2000 years ago. Those histories and literary, grammar works might have been lost during natural disasters or wars.

Literature from the Third Tamil Academy does provide some information about the ruling dynasties, kingdoms, kings, poets, wars and day-to-day life of that time, about 2000 years ago. Archeological excavations in Tamil Nadu, stone inscriptions found in northern India, Sanskrit, Sinhalese, Greek and Roman texts of around that time also provide supporting information about kings and places.

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### 3. First Golden Age of Tamil Nadu

#### 3.1 Overview

The First Golden Age of Tamil Nadu is about 2000 years ago during the Third Tamil Academy. There were three Tamil dynasties, namely, Chera, Chola and Pandiya dynasties. They ruled the Chera Kingdom (Chera country, Chera Nadu), Chola Kingdom (Chola Kingdom, Chola Nadu) and Pandiya Kingdom (Pandiya Country, Pandiya Nadu), respectively. There were many minor kings who ruled small areas, often under the tutelage of one or other of the three dynasties.

The three dynastic kings sometimes lived in friendship, sometimes fought against each other; sometimes one king defeated the others decisively and ruled the entire Tamil Nadu.

There are records of Tamil kings marching north, sometimes as north as the Himalayas, defeating northern kings. Tamil merchants were engaged in overseas trade also, for example, with Greeks and Romans.

Reasons for calling this era as a Golden Age are discussed in the following sections.

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#### 3.2 Military Might of the Tamil Kings and Sovereignty of Tamil Nadu

Outsiders were unable to conquer Tamil Nadu because of the military might of Tamil kings. Tamil Nadu was ruled by Tamils. They did not have to take orders from foreign kings.

As we noted earlier, there are instances of Tamil kings marching north and defeating northern kings. For example, Cheran Senguttuvan fought two northern kings, Kanaka and Vijaya, because he heard from spies that they insulted Tamil kings. He also used the opportunity to bring stone from Himalayas to carve a statue for "goddess" Kannaki. It is said that he defeated the armies of Kanaka, Vijaya and their allies in a single day.

Another Chera king whose army marched all the way to Himalayas was Imaia Varampan Nedunj Cheralaathan. A Pandiya king who went north and defeated northern Aryan kings was Nedunjchezian. He was called Ariya Padai Kadantha Nedunjchezian. "Ariya Padai Kadantha" means "One who crossed the Aryan armies".

Katikala Cholan is another Tamil king whose army marched all the way to Himalayas and engraved the Chola emblem (the tiger emblem) on Himalayas. Talking of Karikala Cholan, we should mention that he raised the banks of Cauveri River (Kaveri River) to reduce flooding of the surrounding area. He also built a dam across Kaveri, known as the Grand Anicut and Kallanai (stone dam).

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### **3.3 Just Governance of Tamil Kings**

Tamil literature of that time talks of the just governance of many kings. There are incidences of poets pointing to wrongful deeds to the king himself and the king regretting and correcting his mistake. There is mention of an unrepentant tyrant named Nannan in Kurunthokai (Verse 292). He was not one of the major kings from the Chera, Chola or Pandiya dynasty; he was one of the minor kings ruling small areas. There might have been other tyrant kings also but there is no mention of them in literature available today.

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### **3.4 Foreign Trade and the Wealth it Generated**

Tamil merchants traded with Egypt, Greece and Rome. Their merchants came to Tamil Nadu and Tamil merchants went to these countries. Tamils called Greeks and Romans as "yavanas". Archeological excavations have revealed Greek and Roman settlements in the port city of Kaviri Poom Pattinam. Roman coins dating to Year 27 BC have also been found in those excavations.

Roman merchants living in Musiri Port had a temple for their Emperor Caesar Augustus who ruled Rome from from 27 BC to AD 14. Worshipping their emperors as gods was customary in those days. Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (a sea route manuscript written around 60 - 100 AD) describes the riches of Pandian Kingdom. The Roman historian Strabo (first century BC) describes trade between Tamil Nadu and Rome. Pliny writes about Tamil Nadu in his book (approximately 77 AD). Tamil Nadu exported to Rome pepper and other spices, sandalwood, betel, silk, ivory and pearls, and imported glass, gold and wine. There are records of some Roman politicians complaining about the loss of gold to buy Tamil Nadu silk for their wives. Tamil Nadu imported horses from Arabia. It also traded with Java. [BC is also referred as BCE; AD is also referred as CE.]

In addition to trade, Tamil Nadu also had political connections with Rome. Pandiyan kings sent ambassadors to Rome in those days.

There are couple of differences between the years of the first golden era and today in foreign trade. In those days all decisions about foreign trade (what to export and what to import, set prices for export and import) were made in Tamil Nadu. So decisions were made in the best interest of Tamil Nadu (what works the best for Tamil Nadu). Today the situation is different. Foreign trade decisions are made by the Indian government that is located a thousand miles away in the north. Decisions were not always made in the best interest of Tamil Nadu. This situation should change. Tamil Nadu State Government should be able to make all decisions pertinent to Tamil Nadu.

Today's Tamil Nadu merchants and other workers are as industrious, able and efficient as those of the first golden age. Yet our standard of living is low and our chief ministers



have to beg Indian prime ministers for money and loans. Why? During the first golden age, what we produced and profits we made in trade stayed in Tamil Nadu and used for the betterment of Tamil Nadu. Today Indian government collects most taxes, takes to New Delhi and gives us back a small portion of it in the form of infrastructure (roads, railway, etc.) and fiscal grants. Bulk of taxes collected from Tamil Nadu is used for the benefit of Hindi states. [This is discussed with numbers and statistics in Section 10.1.] That is why Tamil Nadu has low standard of living today compared to some other Asian countries like Singapore and Malaysia.

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### **3.5 Tamil Kings - Patrons of Tamil**

Pandyan kings were the patrons of the Third Tamil Academy (Third Tamil Sangam). Chola and Chera kings as well as some of the minor kings also gave financial support to their favourite poets. Tamil poems of the Third Tamil Academy were the greatest treasure of the Tamil people. Many foreign scholars, philosophers and intellectuals have showered praises on some of the works. The European linguist and scholar Dr. Kamil Zvelebil said, "Tholkappiam is the finest monument of human intelligence". European philosopher Dr. Albert Schweitzer said, "Thirukural is one of the grandest achievements of the human mind)". We will stop with these two examples because we want to keep this section not too long.

Tamil kings were patrons of Tamil. Tamil Nadu State Government does fund Tamil projects but the Indian government that collects thousands of crores in taxes from Tamil Nadu provides only meager funds for Tamil, as compared to Hindi and Sanskrit [see Section 10.7].

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#### **4.**

### **Interim Period: Kaḷappira and Pallava Dynasties**

Rule of the three dynasties (Chera, Chola and Pandiya) waned down in Tami Nadu. It was followed by Kaḷappira (Kalabhra, Kaḷabrar) dynasty. Not much is known about Kaḷappira rule. Then came the Pallava dynasty. Tamil Nadu did well during the Pallava rule. They had powerful military. The famous temples of Mamallapuram were built by Pallava rulers. Yet those days did not reach the level that could be called a Golden Age (golden era).

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## **5. Second Golden Age of Tamil Nadu**

### **5.1 Vijayalaya Cholan: Foundation for the Second Golden Age**

Chola Dynasty that was powerful during the First Golden Age weakened over the years and was reduced to the status of minor kings under Pallava rule. Cholas started to get stronger under a great Warrior King called Vijayalaya Cholan (850-880 AD). He was known as "thonnoottaaru pun konda" Vijayalaya Cholan because he supposedly had 96 wounds at battles. He ruled a small area in and around Palayaru, under the tutelage of Pallavas. He conquered some nearby territories including Thanjavoor (Thanjai, Tanjore).

In one of the battles, he was leading his soldiers on an elephant. At one point his elephant was seriously injured. He was also injured. His soldiers lost the will to continue fighting without their king there to lead. Understanding the situation, Vijayalaya Cholan got on the shoulders of two soldiers, wielded his sword and continued leading his soldiers. The soldiers followed their king, fought vigorously and won the battle.

Valiant Vijayalaya Cholan laid the foundation work for the rise of Chola dynasty again and the birth of the Second Golden Age of Tamil Nadu. Successive Chola kings conquered more and more territory. In the next few centuries they conquered entire Tamil Nadu, then went on to conquer more territories in India as well as across the seas, in today's Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia.

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### **5.2 Raja Raja Cholan I: Beginnings of the Second Golden Age**

#### **5.2.1 Military Might**

First Raja Raja Cholan's reign started in 985. He spent the next few years in building up his army. Once that was achieved he fought Chera and Pandiya kings and brought entire Tamil Nadu under his rule. He assumed the title "mummudi cholana"; it means Cholan who wears three crowns (crowns of Chera, Chola and Pandyan kingdoms). He marched his armies north beyond Tamil Nadu and conquered parts of today's Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.

Raja Raja Cholan's Navy also captured northern parts of Sri Lanka and Maldives Island. These overseas conquests were necessary for the control of trade routes to Southeast Asia.

While Raja Raja Cholan fought with those kings who opposed him, he had friendly relationship with other. While he fought with Western Chalukyas, he had friendly relationship with Eastern Chalukyas. He traded with China and exchanged gifts with the Chinese emperor.

### 5.2.2 Civil Administration

Raja Raja Cholan also excelled in the civil administration of his empire. He divided his empire into mandalams (provinces), valanadus (divisions) and kottams (districts). Kottams (districts) consisted of nagarams (cities), purams (towns), and uurs (villages). While the empire had a strong, centralized administration, the lower units all the way to villages had decision-making powers on local matters. His administrative structure is praised by historians. Success of the able administration of the empire was attributed to the appointment of able officers.

Some of his top administrators are:

Chief Surveyors and Tax Assessors: Senapathi Kuravan Ulakalanthaan and Ulakalaviththa Thiruvadigal Saththan (these two were responsible for surveying the entire kingdom and assessing taxes on these lands)

Chief Treasurer: Eeraviravan Pallavaraiyan

Temples Administrator: Kandaraathiththan.

Military was an important part of the empire. Commander-in-Chief was Pinchavan Maaraayan.

### 5.2.3 Religion

Raja Raja Cholan supported all religions although he was Sivan worshipper (Saivaite, Shaivaite). He built temples for Vishnu (Vaishnavaites Temples) in the Karnataka areas he conquered because there lived many Vaishnavaites. He funded the construction of a Buddhist in Nagapattinam. Some minor kings under him funded Samana temples.

### 5.2.4 Thanjai Periya Kovil (Thanjavoor Big Temple)

The Thanjai Periya Kovil (Thanjavoor Big Temple) he built for Sivan (Saivaite temple) is a masterpiece of Tamil architecture, and is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This temple is also known as Peruvudaiyaar Kovil, Brihadishvara temple and Rajarajeswaram.

Today this great temple built by a great Tamil king is not in the hands of Tamil Nadu State Government. It is now administered by the Indian Government. In 1985, on the occasion of the 1000-th anniversary of Raja Raja Cholan's ascension to the Chola throne, Tamil Nadu State government wanted to install a statue of King Raja Raja Cholan on the temple compound (not within the temple).

Thousands of tourists and worshipers visit this temple from other states and other countries. May be Indian government does not want others to know about this great Tamil king? Our view is supported by the fact that Indian government sponsored textbooks allot pages and pages for the history of North Indian royal dynasties like Guptas and Mauryas but spend only a couple of pages for Tamil dynasties, thus hiding the glorious history of Tamil Nadu. Similarly the emphasis of these Indian government

sponsored textbooks is on northerners who fought against British rule but very little on South Indian freedom fighters.

On February 12, 2002, the Twenty Ninth All-India Conference of Dravidian Linguistics held in Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala State, passed a resolution urging Indian Government "to give Dravidian South its rightful and legitimate share in the history books and to withdraw the new syllabus prepared and published by the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training)".

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### **5.3 First Rajendra Cholan: Peak of the Second Golden Age**

Rajendra Cholan I (1012-1044) was the son of Raja Raja Cholan I. We may say that the Second Golden Age of Tamil Nadu saw its pinnacle during his reign. Raja Rajan had already conquered most of South India. Rajendra Cholan had to put out some rebellions in the south. Then his military marched north. His forces went all the way to Ganges and conquered even some parts of today's West Bengal. He was called "Gangai Konda Cholan (The Chola who took Ganges)". He brought water from the holy Ganges to consecrate the temple he built.

Rajendra Cholan also had a powerful navy. The Chola Navy conquered Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nichobar Island, northern Sumatra, Kadaram (southern part of today's Malaysia), Thailand and parts of Myanmar. He got the title "Kadaaram Konda Cholan (The Chola who took Kadaram)".

It is worth mentioning that no other South Asian king had such overseas conquests to his credit. The land area he conquered is larger than those of any other South Asian king. You will not find this information in history textbooks sponsored/funded by Indian government. Neither will you find this information in school curricula of CBSE schools that come under Indian government Education Ministry (CBSE - Central Board of Secondary Education). They teach all about north Indian Guptas and Mauryas but very little about South Indian kings.

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### **5.4 Decline of the Chola Empire and the End of Second Golden Age**

The Chola dynasty flourished during the days of several kings who reigned after Rajendra Cholan I, namely,

Rajadhiraja Cholan,  
Rajendra Cholan II,  
Vira rajendra Cholan,  
Athirajendra Cholan,  
Kulothunga Cholan I,

Vikrama Cholan,  
Kulothunga Cholan II,  
Rajaraja Cholan II,  
Rajadhiraja Cholan II,  
Kulothunga Cholan III.

From Raja Raja Cholan I to Kulothunga Cholan III (985 to 1218) spans a period of over 230 years and this period is generally considered the Second Golden Age of Tamil Nadu. Chola Dynasty did continue the Chola kingdom for many more years but the dynasty was on the decline after Kulothunga Cholan III.

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## **5.5 Glories of the Second Golden Age**

### 5.5.1 Foreign Relations and Trade

Cholas not only conquered vast territories with their military might, they also sent ambassadors to foreign lands and had friendly relationships. Tamils also had flourishing trade with many countries overseas.

Chinese records mention that Raja Raja Cholan in 1015, Rajendra Cholan in 1033 and Kulothunga Cholan in 1077 sent emissaries to China. Cholas had friendly relationships, as well as, trade with Camposa (today's Cambodia), Kadaram (today's southern Malaysia) and Sumatra.

One reason for Chola war with some overseas countries was to protect Tamil merchants and their vessels. Today, Sri Lankan Navy is shooting at Tamil Nadu fishermen, killing and wounding hundreds. Alas, Tamil Nadu State does not have a navy but Indian government that collects billions of Rupees in taxes from Tamil Nadu has a powerful navy, a hundred times stronger than Sri Lankan navy. Why is it not protecting Tamil Nadu fishermen? You can read more about it in Section 10.14.

### 5.5.2 Land Survey of the Kingdom

Raja Raja Cholan conducted a survey of the entire kingdom in 1001 and Kulothunga Cholan did so in 1086. Agricultural lands were classified according to their yield and taxed accordingly. Part of the monies from these taxes was allocated for building lakes, canals and other agricultural infrastructure that benefited farmers and landowners. Indian government collects a number of taxes today from Tamil Nadu and spends bulk of them for the benefit of Hindi-belt states (see Section 10.1 for details). Tamil people get impoverished. Using large sums of tax monies from Tamil Nadu for the benefit of Hindi-belt states is unfair.

### 5.5.3 Arts and Culture

Chola kings were also patrons of Tamil. Kamba Ramayanam, Periya Puranam, Nalavenpa, kalingaththu Parani are examples of literature from the Second Golden Age. In my personal opinion, these excellent literary works are not as great as the literature of the First Golden Age in the depth of philosophical and moral contents, they equal or excel in their imaginative, descriptive literary style.

Tamil Nadu also excelled in architecture and sculptures during the Second Golden Age, as exemplified by the Thanjai Big Temple that Raja Raja Cholan built and Gangaikondacholapuram Temple that Rajendra Cholan built. Thanjai Big Temple is not only a grand display of Tamil architecture and sculptures, there are also noteworthy paintings. Some of the sculptures show dancing poses indicating dancing art in Tamil Nadu at that time. Stone inscriptions of that time mention two dramas: "Sri Raja Rajeswaram" and "Sri Rajaraja Vijayam". Scripts of these dramas are lost, may be to termites, fire or flood.

#### 5.5.4 Civil Administration

Civil administration of the kingdom had the king at the top, with ministers appointed by him at the next level. Different parts of the kingdom were administered by two grades of officers: senior officers and junior officers. They were appointed by the king on the advice of ministers. Villages were administered by Village Councils (voor vaariam) whose members were selected by villagers. Thus Chola kingdom had a mix of royal rule at higher levels and a type of democracy at lower levels.

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### **6. Interim Period: Rise and Fall of Pandiya Dynasty**

We stated in Section 5.4 that the Second Golden Age of Tamil Nadu ended in 1218 with the rule of Kulothunga Cholan III. Power of the Cholas declined during the ensuing kings Rajaraja Cholan III and Rajendra Cholan III and ended by 1279 with Rajendra Cholan III. In the meanwhile Pandiya dynasty was rising as the Chola dynasty declined. Pandiyas annexed Chola country to the Pandiya Empire in 1280. Cholas became mere minor kings ruling small regions of Tamil Nadu.

Pandiya dynasty did not last long and so Tamil Nadu did not reach the level of the glory days of Chola dynasty. What is the reason for the decline of Pandiya dynasty in such a short time?

Fall of the ascending Pandiya dynasty in such a short time is attributed to the infighting in the royal family for the Pandiya throne between the sons of King Maravarman Kulasekhara Pandiyan. Younger brother Veera Pandiyan (Vira Pandiyan) won the infighting and became the king. The losing elder brother Sundara Pandiyan fled Tamil Nadu and sought help from Delhi Sultan Alauddin Khalji. The Delhi Sultan asked his commander Malik Kafur, who was already in Southern India, to march to Pandiya Nadu (Pandiya Country). Malik Kafur entered Pandiya Nadu and fought not only Veera

Pandiyan but also Sundara Pandiyan. Malik Kafur's army went around Tamil Nadu and plundered it in 1311. He left Tamil Nadu with large number of elephants, horses, gold and precious stones.

Even though Malik Kafur left Tamil Nadu, infighting between the Pandiya brothers, battles with Malik Kafur's army and Malik Kafur's plunder all left Tamil Nadu weak and divided. Tamil Nadu never again reached the past days of glory. All because of brothers fighting for the throne. We cannot go back in time and correct the situation, but we can try not to repeat history again. Political fighting between Tamil-centric parties (DMK, AIADMK, MDMK, PMK, VCK, TNK) and their alliances with Hindi-region-centric parties (Congress, BJP) worry us. Tamil-centric parties allying among themselves and fighting each other in election for power is all right but their alliance with Hindi-region-centric parties worries us. We remember Sundara Pandian seeking Delhi Sultanate for help against his brother Veera Pandiyan and the consequent destruction of Tamil Nadu. Let us not repeat the mistake again.

[AIADMK - All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam  
BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party  
DMK - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam  
MDMK - Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam  
NTK - Naam Tamilar Katchi  
PMK Paattali Makkal Katchi  
VCK - Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi]

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## 7.

### **Beginning of the Dark Days: Fragmented Tamil Nadu and Alien Rulers**

After Malik Kafur left Tamil Nadu, there were couple of more invasions from the Delhi Sultans. Much of Tamil Nadu became part of Sultan Mohammad-bin-Tughlug's empire of the Delhi Sultanate for a brief period (approximately 1327 to 1335). Then the local commanders of the Delhi Sultanate rebelled against him and established their own rule as independent Madurai Sultanate (or Ma'bar Sultanate). Thus the Delhi rule over Tamil Nadu ended in less than 8 years.

Madurai Sultanate fell to the Vijayanagar Emperor and much of Tamil Nadu was annexed to the Vijayanagar Empire. This was a southern empire and did not include northern India. Soon some Vijayanagar commanders in Tamil Nadu rebelled against the emperor and established their own "kingdoms" in Tamil Nadu. These commanders are Telugu Nayaks. Thus began the "kingdoms" of Madurai Nayaks, Thanjai Nayaks and Ginjee Nayaks.

Nayak rule gave way to Maharashtrian rule. These Maharashtrian invaders conquered and ruled much of Tamil Nadu for a while. Again, the Maharashtrian invaders ruled Tamil Nadu as a separate entity and not part of any northern empire. About this time Aurangzeb, the Moghul Emperor from Delhi, invaded Tamil Nadu and annexed much of it to his Delhi-based empire. This was the second time Tamil Nadu came under Delhi rule. This lasted for only a few years.

The local Mogul commanders rebelled against Aurangzeb and established themselves as independent rulers (Nawabs). Thus started the Nawab rule over Tamil Nadu. After the Nawab rule, Europeans came to power in various parts of Tamil Nadu. European rule (primarily British rule) over Tamil Nadu lasted for almost two centuries. We will discuss European rule in Section 8. It is worth noting that, before the British rule, Tamil Nadu was ruled from Delhi as part of some type of Indian empire for only about ten years (first during the Delhi Sultanate of Mohammad-bin-Tughlug and then during the Moghul Empire of Aurangzeb).

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## **8. Tamil Nadu under British Rule**

European traders conquered militarily the minor kings and chieftains who ruled the fragmented Tamil Nadu. After years of warfare Pondicherry came under French rule and the rest of Tamil Nadu came under British rule.

British conquered not only Tamil Nadu but also almost all of South Asia, and consolidated them for administrative purposes into a single country called India. Tamil Nadu became part of this British India. Never before was Tamil Nadu part of any country similar to India except for about ten years (first during the Delhi Sultanate of Mohammad-bin-Tughlug and then during the Moghul Empire of Aurangzeb).

At one point Burma (today's Myanmar) was part of British India and was called the Province of Burma. British rulers separated the province from India in 1937 and made it a separate country. British left Burma in 1948 and Burma became an independent country. The country changed its name to Myanmar in 1989.

People of British India (essentially South Asia) opposed the British rule. They joined hands across ethnic, language and religious differences in the common cause of ending British rule. The thing that united them was their desire to end British rule.

British decided to end their rule in 1947. They divided British India on the basis of religion into two independent countries: India (primarily Hindu religion) and Pakistan (primarily Muslim religion). India consisted of people of many languages and ethnicities, each living in their own regions (Marathis in today's Maharashtra, Malayalis in today's Kerala, etc.). Pakistan consisted of Punjabis, Pashtuns, Bengalis, Sindhis, etc. Bengalis separated from Pakistan to form Bangladesh in 1971 on the basis of ethnicity and language. Although there are separatist movements and even a few armed rebellion, India is intact.

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## 9.

### **Hindi Imperialism in Post-British India**

Parliamentary democracy was set up in post-British India. In order for democracy to be fair in a country that consists of people of multiple ethnicities, nationalities, cultures and languages, the dominant group (group with the largest population even if somewhat short of a majority) must not take advantage of the other groups. All groups (ethnicities, nationalities, cultures and languages) must be treated equal and no one group shall exploit another group or groups. Such a decent democracy did not happen in the post-British (post-1947) India.

According to Wikipedia, "The Hindi Belt or Hindi Heartland or Hindi Patti, is a linguistic region encompassing parts of northern, central, eastern and western India where Hindi (and the various languages/dialects grouped under it) are widely spoken" [Reference 8]. This Hindi-belt spans several states and has about 40% of the Indian population. Mother tongue of some of them is not Hindi, as such, but dialects of Hindi such as Awadhi, Bhojpuri and Garwali. The Hindi-region sends about 40% of the Members of the Parliament (MPs) and thus these "Hindi politicians" have become the de facto rulers of India.

Essentially Hindi and associated dialects have approximately 40% votes in parliament and the remaining 60% is shared among about 15 languages/ethnicities. All that Hindi politicians needed was to get 10% support from the non-Hindi group to pass any law or block any law. They, on their own, without support from a single non-Hindi parliament member can block most constitutional amendments because most constitutional amendments require two-thirds vote of MPs present and voting in the parliament.

Hindi politicians use this power to benefit Hindi-belt region at the expense of many non-Hindi regions. Billions of Rupees of tax monies collected from Tamil Nadu by Indian government are used for the benefit of Hindi-belt region. This is explained in Section 10.1.

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## 10. Sad State of Tamil Nadu Today

### 10.1 Economic Plunder of Tamil Nadu

#### 10.1.1 How much money is plundered?

Here are some statistics. Percentage of tax monies received back from the Indian Government by 3 southern states and 3 Hindi-belt states are listed below [these numbers are from [Reference 2]. **What do these numbers mean?** For every 100 Rupees Indian government collects in taxes from Tamil Nadu, only 40 Rupees is given back to Tamil Nadu in the form of financial grants, central government projects, etc. Similarly, for every 100 Rupees Indian government collects in taxes from the Hindi-belt state of Bihar, 96 Rupees is given back to it in the form of financial grants, central government projects, etc. Now read the numbers below.

#### ----- Non-Hindi Southern States -----

(The southern states of Andhra and Telangana are not included because the data is prior to the year when these two states were created.)

Karnataka ----- Rs. 47  
Kerala ----- Rs. 25  
Tamil Nadu ----- Rs. 40

#### ----- Hindi-Belt States -----

Bihar ----- Rs. 96  
Madhya Pradesh ----- Rs. 75  
Uttar Pradesh ----- Rs. 179

The numbers tell the story. It is nothing but economic plunder.

#### 10.1.2 Progress of Tamil Nadu Stunted

How does the transfer of thousands of crores of Rupees from southern states to Hindi-belt states affect the South? It stunts the growth of the southern states. [1 crore = 10 million]

"India's growth would have progressed better if it comprised its southern and western parts only", said former Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram to American Ambassador Timothy Roemer in August 2009. He further added that India could achieve 11 to 12 percent growth if it were the South and West only, and noted that the rest of the country held the South and West back. Ambassador Roemer cabled this information to his government. This secret cable was revealed by a disgruntled American government employee in 2011. The Hindu (newspaper) as well as other newspapers published it in March 2011.

### 10.1.3 Standard of living depressed (Health Care, Education, Poverty)

Not only in economic progress but also in the delivery of public services, such as food, health care and school education, Tamil Nadu would be better off if thousands of crores of Rupees were not transferred from Tamil Nadu to Hindi-belt every year. "A number of Indian states--Kerala and Tamil Nadu, for example--would be at the top of the South Asian comparisons if they were treated as separate countries, and others--Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, for example--would do enormously worse." - Professors Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen in their 2013 book "An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions" (both authors are economists and Amartya Sen received the Nobel prize in economics in 1998). [Reference 3]

Tamil Nadu is unable to achieve its full potential and people of Tamil Nadu unable to enjoy the fruits of their work and study because much of what people and businesses pay in taxes are transferred to Hindi states. We should put an end to it.

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### **10.2 Tamil Nadu Discriminated in Infrastructure Development**

Because Indian government collects thousands of crores Rupees of taxes from Tamil Nadu, it is Indian government's responsibility to build the necessary infrastructure (railway, roads, ports, Internet cables, irrigation channels, dams, etc.) to support farming, manufacturing and trading. Tamil Nadu is discriminated grossly on infrastructure development. Successive Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu have complained about this discrimination and they have no effect on the Indian government. Discrimination of Tamil Nadu continues. It is documented in Reference 7. We are not asking for charity, we are asking Indian government give back our due share of our own taxes Indian government collects from us. Each state should get back the same percentage of its taxes back from Indian government. Instead, as we showed in Section 10.1.1, Uttar Pradesh is getting 179% (more than it pays in Indian government taxes) and Tamil Nadu is getting 40%.

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### **10.3 Powers of Tamil Nadu State Government is Reduced**

Powers allotted to state governments was not much in the original constitution that came into effect on January 26, 1950. Even then there were voices raised that states are not given enough powers.

M.Thirumala Rao said in the Constituent Assembly on November 22, 1949, "We wanted to have a federal constitution but we have produced a constitution that is mostly unitary." P. Krishna Mukherjee wrote in his article "Is India a federation?" (The Indian Journal of Political Science, July-September 1954), "The constitution that emerged out of the august

deliberations of the constituent assembly of India in January 1950 is a definitely unfederal or unitary constitution."

So the Indian constitution was already a semi federal-unitary constitution. Constitutional amendments, parliamentary laws and government orders over the years have further reduced state government powers.

Against our objections, Indian government is approving industrial plants that pollute our air, land and water. Natural gas pipelines and petroleum pipelines are laid through agricultural fields. Highways are routed through agricultural areas disrupting farming communities. I am not an environmental scientist to say if these projects are good or bad. My complaint is that decisions should be made by Tamil Nadu government and not by Indian government. This is our land, this is our people; we should make the decisions. We say, leave the decisions to the Tamil Nadu State government without any interference from the Indian government.

Indian government is not only laying pipelines and highways through agricultural lands against our objections, it also wants to destroy our ancient temples to give room for highways. In 2012, The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) wanted to demolish the 1300-years old Tirupuravar Panankateesvarar Temple, in order to widen the Vikkiravandi –Thanjavur National Highway. Local people protested. After months of protests NHAI relented, and adjusted the highway such that this ancient Saivaite temple could continue to stand majestic in the village of Panaiyapuram, Villupuram District. Why do we have to engage in protest demonstrations, wasting our time and energy to protect our ancient temples from the hands of Indian government? Decisions should be left to Tamil Nadu State government.

This is why Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi said, "Centre [Indian government] should not be an overlord." (ThePrint.in; August 8, 2018). Former Chief Minister Jayalalithaa said at a conference on internal security in New Delhi on April 16, 2012, "The constant attempts to reduce States to the level of glorified Municipal Corporations heavily dependent on the Centre [Indian government] for funds is a travesty of the federal nature of our existence. This attitude is disturbing and the implication of such exercises is not conducive to either State or National growth."

These complaints of Tamil Nadu Chief Ministers fall into the deaf ears of Hindi politicians who control the Indian government. This situation should change. Tamil Nadu State government should be able to decide all matters internal to Tamil Nadu.

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## **10.4 Interference in Our Education System**

Education used to be under the sole control of state governments. Then the constitution was amended to bring it under the dual control of Indian and state governments. With the constitutional amendment in hand, Indian government is making more and more

decisions on education even if the state government disagrees. Tamil Nadu had disagreed with a number of issues on education but Indian government overruled them.

Indian government established the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and schools may affiliate with CBSE instead of Tamil Nadu State Board of Education. These school curricula are set by people in New Delhi who do not know Tamil Nadu. This leads to CBSE students graduating from CBSE schools without knowing the culture and history of Tamil Nadu. This should change and go back to where it was before the constitutional amendment. All schools within Tamil Nadu, both government and private schools, should be under Tamil Nadu State Board of Education and school curricula should be set by state government. We should be responsible for the education of our children, and not a government located a thousand miles north of the state.

All universities in Tamil Nadu (with the exception of Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai) used to be under Tamil Nadu state government. Indian government has set up a number of Central Universities in Tamil Nadu in recent years. Vice-chancellors who head the central universities are appointed by Indian government and college curricula are determined by Indian government. All central universities and budgets allocated for these universities (it is our tax money, not Hindi tax money) must be transferred to Tamil Nadu government.

Until recently, Indian government stayed out of Tamil Nadu state universities such as University of Madras, Anna University, Bharathi University, etc. Indian government started interfering in these universities too. Out-of-staters are appointed as Vice-Chancellors at some of our universities. These vice-chancellors do not know the heritage, culture and history of Tamil Nadu; neither do they know Tamil language. It is an insult to the people of Tamil Nadu, it is a stab to our face and a stab in our belly--we will slowly bleed to death.

Education should be under the sole control of state governments. All schools, universities and institutes of higher education should be brought under state jurisdiction. Let Hindi politicians run their educational system, we will run ours.

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### **10.5 All India Entrance Examinations must be Abolished**

Admission to medical colleges in Tamil Nadu was decided by procedures established by Tamil Nadu Education Ministry. Indian government interfered in this too. It instituted in 2018 an All-India examination called NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) for admission to our medical colleges. It brought untold hardships to Tamil Nadu students. Students, parents and doctors opposed this NEET. Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly passed a unanimous resolution opposing NEET. Indian government ignored this resolution and continues to order us that medical school admissions should be based on NEET. Unanimous resolution of the state legislative assembly is ignored. Is it democracy or Hindi crazy?

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## **10.6 Hindi Imposition**

Everyone in Tamil Nadu knows about Hindi imposition. Hindi imposition is not something of the past. It is current and continuing. Reference 4 lists and summarizes over 50 Hindi imposition related news items between 2015 and 2018.

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## **10.7 Hindi, Sanskrit and Tamil: Expenditures**

Indian government spends more than 200 times on Hindi compared to that on Tamil. Indian government spends more than 25 times on Sanskrit compared to that on Tamil. During the past three years Indian government spent 643.85 crores Rupees for Sanskrit and spent only 22.94 crores Rupees for Tamil (Hindu newspaper - Tamil edition; August 9, 2023). When we question this disparity on allocating our tax monies, Indian government invariably responds that Indian constitution has declared Hindi as India's official language and so it is our duty to develop Hindi. Why are you spending so much money on Sanskrit? Indian constitution does not give any special status to Sanskrit. It has the same status as every one of the 22 languages listed in the Indian constitution.

We say there should be no language discrimination. Allocate development funds to languages in proportion to their population base. Then Hindi would get 5 times as much as Tamil gets. We can accept that.

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## **10.8 Tamil is Ignored, Discriminated and Sidelined**

There is no Tamil in most Indian government owned bank Automated Teller Machines (ATM); only Hindi and English. Train tickets used to be in English and Tamil during British rule. Train tickets issued at many stations in our independent India is in Hindi and English only; no Tamil. Who got independence on August 15, 1947? Only Hindi people?

You can reserve train tickets only in Hindi or English at Indian Railways website. Where is Tamil? Safety messages posted in train compartments are in Hindi and English only. Where is Tamil? If you fly in Indian government owned airlines between two cities within Tamil Nadu, all the announcements and safety instructions are in Hindi and English only. Where is Tamil?

Cooking gas cylinders sold in Tamil Nadu have safety instructions in Hindi and English only. Indian government does not care if Tamil people die because they use cooking gas in unsafe ways because they cannot read Hindi or English safety instructions.



Tamil has no place in most offices of the Indian government and Indian government owned businesses located in Tamil Nadu. Tamil is ignored. When will it change? Will it ever change?

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### **10.9 State and Indian Government Officers who Do Not Know Tamil**

Indian government appoints out-of-staters who do not know Tamil at banks, railways and other offices in Tamil Nadu. This is an unwanted hardship for people who do not know Hindi or English.

Also, appointment out-of-staters who do not know Tamil at senior state government jobs such as District Collectors and Director General of Police (DGP) is a slap on the people of Tamil Nadu. Giving them a couple of months of Tamil training is a joke. These officers cannot and do not write letters or memoranda in Tamil or engage in any official conversation with senior or junior officers in Tamil. Except for saying "Good Morning" or "Thank You" or a few other such minor things, they do everything else in English. Common people who do not know Hindi or English cannot communicate with these officers. Many IAS officers know Hindi far better than Tamil and so Hindi people who came from a thousand miles in the north can communicate with these officers in their mother tongue but the sons and daughters of the soil cannot speak with them in their mother tongue.

It has become customary to appoint some Madras High Court judges from out of state who do not know Tamil. It is outrageous for Indian government to insist that some high court judges should be from out of state. Are we a free democracy or subservient vassal state to Delhi rule?

Recently an out-of-stater who does not know Tamil was appointed Vice-Chancellor to one of our universities. Our university education should be managed and shaped by one from our state, and should not be imported from another state.

All in all Indian government has made linguistic state a mockery, by appointing a number of senior administrative officers (IAS officers), police officers, high court judges and a university vice-chancellor from out of state. How can Tamil thrive in Tamil Nadu, when a number of senior administrative officers (IAS officers), police officers, high court judges and a university vice-chancellor do not know Tamil?

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### **10.10 Indian Government is Hiding the History and Heritage of Tamil and Tamil Nadu**

History books published or funded by Indian government hide the history of Tamil Nadu (couple of pages only) while most of the pages in these books are devoted to the history

of what is now Northern India. Those who read these history books get the understanding that glorious empires and cultures flourished in those regions while the rest of the subcontinent did not have much of a culture or kingdoms to write about. Similarly the emphasis of these Indian government sponsored textbooks is on northerners who fought against British rule but very little on South Indian freedom fighters.

On February 12, 2002, the Twenty Ninth All-India Conference of Dravidian Linguistics held in Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala State, passed a resolution urging Indian Government "to give Dravidian South its rightful and legitimate share in the history books and to withdraw the new syllabus prepared and published by the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training)".

Indian government operates the free, broadcast television network Doordharshan using our tax monies. The national network seen all over India has more than 90% Hindi programmes, movies and Hindi region cultural shows (regional channels do show Tamil programmes but they are not seen only in Tamil Nadu and border areas). Tamil Nadu government installed a giant statue for internationally acclaimed Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar. Tamil Nadu government asked Indian government to broadcast a half-an-hour programme about Thiruvalluvar on that occasion. Indian government refused. Indian government does not want people outside of Tamil Nadu know about this great poet who is considered one of the greatest philosophers by international scholars.

This is what scholars of international reputation have to say about Thiru Valluvar and his book Thirukural. The great Russian writer **Leo Tolstoy** said that he had taken the concept of non-violence from a German translation of Thiru Kural. **Dr. Albert Schweitzer** said: "There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much of wisdom." **Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature** says: "'Sacred Couplets (that is Thirukural) is considered a masterpiece of human thought, compared in India and abroad to the Bible, John Milton's Paradise Lost, and the works of Plato.'" Yet Indian government refused to allot a half-an-hour programme about Thiruvalluvar. They do not want people outside of Tamil Nadu know that a great philosopher poet lived in Tamil Nadu.

Today Thanjai Big Temple built by the great Tamil king Raja Raja Cholan is not in the hands of Tamil Nadu State Government but is administered by the Indian Government. In 1985, on the occasion of the 1000-th anniversary of Raja Raja Cholan's ascension to the Chola throne, Tamil Nadu State government wanted to install a statue of King Raja Raja Cholan on the temple compound (not within the temple). Indian government refused permission. Thousands of tourists and worshipers visit this temple from other states and other countries. May be Indian government does not want others to know about this great Tamil king?

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## **10.11 Indian Government Ignores and Blacks Out Promising Archeological Sites**

While history of Tamil kingdoms are excluded or minimally covered in Indian government funded history books, an even graver injustice is done by Indian government not adequately funding ancient archeological sites in Tamil Nadu and hiding promising finding from excavations. If promising results showing evidence of ancient civilization in Tamil Nadu were found, Indian government denies continued funding and/or procrastinates issuing reports of the finding for years.

#### Adhichanallur Excavations

Here is an example of how Archeological Survey of India (ASI) attempts to black out evidences of ancient civilizations in Tamil Nadu. Aadhichanallur is a village in Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu. Excavations there between 2003 and 2005 found ancient skeletal remains buried in big urns. What did ASI, funded with our tax monies, do? Nothing. No report was prepared documenting the findings. Instead the whole thing was ignored and the results were buried in some filing cabinet for over a decade.

Over a decade later a private citizen, Mr. S. Kamaraj from Tamil Nadu, filed a public interest litigation at Madras High Court. During the hearing of the case judges said, "There is an allegation that the central government [Indian government] and its ASI are not interested in carrying out excavations in archeological importance sites in Tamil Nadu. We were actually not believing in it. But, you (ASI) give strength to the allegation. Fourteen year ago, excavations were carried out Aadhichanallur village in Thoothukudi district [in Tamil Nadu], but you were not taking action to release reports in that regard. Your inaction proves the allegation." (Times of India; January 31, 2018)

One year later, in 2019, the Court asked ASI to send two sets of samples from the 2003 Adichanallur excavations for carbon dating in United States of America (USA). (Times of India; February 19, 2019). Carbon dating results from USA were stunning. The Adichanallur artifacts were from around 900 BC (that is, the artifacts are about 3000 years old). [Thinathanthi (Tamil newspaper); April 5, 2019] One of the oldest anywhere in India. This may be the reason why Indian Government's Archeological Survey of India (ASI) did not carbon date the artifacts until the court ordered it to do so. The judges said, "In spite of many efforts taken by intellectuals, historians, political leaders and archaeologists, nothing was done by the ASI, for reasons best known to them, to send the Adichanallur samples for carbon dating." (The Hindu; April 5, 2019) In my opinion, had the artifacts been from Hindi-belt region, it would surely have received more funding and publicity.

We will discuss briefly just one more example in the next subsection.

#### Keezhadi excavations

Keezhadi (Keeladi) is a village in Sivagangai District, Tamil Nadu. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) started excavations in Keezhadi in 2015. During the first two phases of the excavations, carried out in 2015 and 2016, archaeologists found Third Tamil Sangam era (Third Tamil Academy era) artifacts. Unearthed artifacts include

pottery pieces with inscriptions in Tamil Brahmi script, copper beads and metal tools. Carbon dating of the artifacts places them at 200 BC ([www.scroll.in](http://www.scroll.in); March 31, 2017). So the artifacts are about 2200 years old.

Any government interested in its ancient history would fund continuation of the project. Instead the Indian government stopped further funding in 2016. Members of Parliament from Tamil Nadu shouted foul and Indian government agreed to fund the third phase. In the meantime K. Amarnath Ramakrishnan, Superintending Archaeologist who oversaw the first two phases, was transferred to Assam in 2017 according to the ASI policy of transferring Superintending Archaeologists every two years, although it would have been logical and wiser to keep Ramakrishnan in Keezhadi to write the Final Report of the first two phases and also continue with the third phase.

Criticizing the transfer of Ramakrishnan, the Madras High Court said, “When the excavations are complete, the pride of Tamil people would be recognized worldwide. But we wonder why the central government is so adamant in the issue.” (Times of India; March 15, 2019)

Not only people of Tamil Nadu but Tamils living outside of Tamil Nadu were also interested in the Keezhadi excavations. Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) invited Ramakrishnan to America for a three-weeks lecture series. FeTNA would pay all expenses for the trip. ASI denied Ramakrishnan permission to go to America and give lectures on Keezhadi findings. ([www.scroll.in](http://www.scroll.in); August 6, 2018) Any government should be thrilled to tell the world about excavations revealing ancient artifacts. Why did Indian government deny permission? It does not want the world to know that Tamil people had an ancient cultured past. In the same way Indian government funded history books hide the history of Tamil Nadu, Indian government's Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is making every effort to hide information about ancient artifacts unearthed in Tamil Nadu.

Many Sanskrit scholars employed at Indian government institutions go abroad to participate and speak in Sanskrit conferences using Indian government funds. Yet Indian government would not permit K. Amarnath Ramakrishnan to go to America and speak about Keezhadi excavations revealing approximately 2200 years old, Third Tamil Sangam era artifacts, even though all expenses would be paid by the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America. Is it not the act of a jealous stepmother?

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## **10.12 Indian Government Interference in Ancient Tamil Cultural Festivals and Events**

Hindi politicians and ministers who do not know Tamil culture and heritage interfere in the internal matters of Tamil Nadu and degrade Tamil culture and heritage. Ban on Jallikattu between 2014 and 2017 and disrespecting the Pongal Festival are two examples we discuss here.

Pongal (harvest festival) is an age old holiday in Tamil Nadu, dating back to at least 2000 years. It is celebrated by all Tamil people irrespective of religion or caste. But Pongal is not a "gazetted holiday (also called mandatory holiday)" in Indian government offices in Tamil Nadu; it is an "optional holiday" only. Indian government offices would be closed and no employee can work on gazetted holidays. Indian government offices would be open and employees may choose to take it as a holiday but they would have to work on some other optional holiday to compensate. Declaring Pongal as an optional holiday (not a gazetted holiday) for Tamil Nadu is an insult to Tamil culture. Do you know what is one of the gazetted (mandatory) holidays? Holi Festival day. It is a North Indian holiday. It was never observed or celebrated in Tamil Nadu until after Hindi rule dawned over India in 1947. Most people of Tamil Nadu have not even heard of Holi festival until after 1947. So Hindi-belt festival is a mandatory (compulsory) holiday in Tamil Nadu but the age old Pongal holiday of Tamil Nadu is not a mandatory (compulsory) holiday in Tamil Nadu. These are dark days, in deed, for Tamil Nadu.

Jallikattu (also known as "manju virattu" and "eru thazhuvuthal") is an ancient bull-taming sport; purpose is not to hurt or kill the bull but to subdue it and take the garland tied to its horns. It dates back to at least 2000 years and now is a popular sporting event during Pongal Festival (harvest festival) in January. Indian Supreme Court banned this sport in 2014 under animal cruelties law. Indian government could have passed a law allowing it and made it legal. Instead an Indian government minister from the Hindi state of Uttar Pradesh, Ms. Menaka Gandhi who does not know anything about Tamil culture or heritage said FALSELY that Jallikattu was imported from Western countries (The Hindu; January 17, 2015). Jallikattu is uniquely of Tamil Nadu origin and is different from Spanish bull fighting. She also said that India's ruling party opposes it. By the way, Tamil Nadu ruling party, as well as the main opposition party whole-heartedly supported Jallikattu. Tamil Nadu State government asked Indian government to remove the ban by passing the necessary law.

Indian government lent deaf ears for Tamil Nadu government's request. People of Tamil Nadu rose in protest against the ban in 2017. Seeing the massive demonstrations in many cities and towns, and realizing people were determined and would continue with the protests until the ban is removed, Indian government took the necessary action to end the ban. Jallikattu events were held as before the 2014 Supreme Court ban, and continue to be held as of now. Indian government could have taken the necessary actions in 2014 itself but it waited until the massive protest demonstrations of 2017. Why do we have to engage in protest demonstrations, wasting our time and energy to hold the 2000 years old ancient sports event that does not harm or kill bulls? Decisions should be left to Tamil Nadu State government.

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### **10.13 Indian Government is Degrading Tamil Language on the Internet**

Indian government attempts to degrade Tamil and show to language scholars and linguists that Sanskrit is superior to Tamil. Here are a few examples.

Unicode is an international system for scripts (letters) used for writing different languages in computers. International Standards Organization (ISO) sets the standards for unicode. ISO consults with the different countries on setting the standard for their language. For example, ISO would consult Poland to set standards for Polish language, Vietnam for Vietnamese, and so on. Since Tamil does not have a country of its own, ISO contacted the Indian government because India has the largest Tamil population. Indian government wrongly and cunningly recommended that Tamil script be treated as a subset of Devanagari script (the script used to write Sanskrit, Hindi and a few other languages). This made Tamil Unicode a little less efficient than it would have been correctly treated as independent of Devanagari script. This is one example of Indian government attempts to degrade Tamil as inferior to Sanskrit. We will give couple of more examples.

In 2010, some non-Tamils tried to mix Tamil letters with Grantha letters in Unicode and thus degrade Tamil. Indian government wrote a letter to International Standards Organization (ISO) supporting this move, without consulting Tamil scholars or Tamil Nadu State government. A number of Tamil scholars condemned Indian government action. The then Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi wrote to Indian government expressing his displeasure at Indian government's action.

Most Indian government websites are in English and Hindi only. Very few have Tamil. Those few Tamil web pages are used to degrade and denigrate Tamil. Take a look at this web page created by Indian government:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180108024441/http://tamil.bharatavani.in:80/#books>

Here are a few lines from that page.

1. பாஷா கோஷா (Bhashakosha)
2. பாத்யபுஸ்தக கோஷா (Textbooks)
3. ஞான கோஷா (Jhanakosha)
4. பஹுமாத்யம கோஷா (Multimedia)
5. ஷப்த கோஷா (Dictionary)

I have written the above Tamil script writings in Roman script (English script) below for the benefit of non-Tamils reading this article.

1. Bhasha Kosha
2. Paathyapustaka Kosha

3. Jnana Kosha

4. Bahumaadhyama Kosha

5. Shabda Kosha

No Tamil will understand what these words written in Tamil script mean unless he/she knows Hindi. This is not accidental or incidental that Hindi-Sanskrit words are unnecessarily infused into Tamil. Hindi-Sanskrit words are purposively written in Tamil script as if there are no Tamil words for them. There are pure Tamil words for them. For example, Tamil word for "textbooks" is "paada nuulkaL (பாட நூல்கள்)". Even a first grade Tamil student knows the word. No Tamil would understand what the website says "பாத்யபுஸ்தக கோஷா (Textbooks) " unless they know Hindi-Sanskrit or English.

There are Sanskrit enthusiasts in India who want to elevate Sanskrit as the supreme language of India. Some of them are powerful politicians including Indian government ministers. One thing that stands in the way of declaring Sanskrit supremacy is Tamil that is old, still alive and independent of Sanskrit or other languages.

You may read more details about how Indian government is denigrating and degrading Tamil in Reference 5.

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#### **10.14 Mass Migration of Hindi People into Tamil Nadu**

Large scale, uncontrolled migration of Hindi migrants into Tamil Nadu creates unemployment among local workers. While lakhs of Tamil Nadu youth are unemployed, why do we import workers from Hindi states? [10 lakhs = 1 million]

Tamil Nadu State government started implementing many population control projects in Tamil Nadu 50 or so years ago. We saw the benefits in 10-20 years later. Students coming out of high schools have opportunities for college education and/or jobs. While Tamil Nadu and other southern states were implementing population control measures, Hindi-belt states relaxed and let population grow uncontrolled. With so much population, their unemployment increased in those states. The unemployed of the Hindi-belt region, with not much education either, are now flooding into Tamil Nadu and are creating unemployment in Tamil Nadu. We are paying a price for Hindi-belt mistakes. It is unfair and unacceptable.

Tamil Nadu State government does not have the power to enact laws limiting migrant inflow to reduce unemployment of local workers. Indian government has the power to enact such a law but refuses to do so. You can read more about this issue in Reference 6.

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### **10.15 Shootings and Killings of Tamil Nadu Fishermen in the Sea**

During the past 30 years, Sri Lankan Navy is shooting and sometimes killing Tamil Nadu fishermen in the sea in between Sri Lanka and India (sometimes in the Sri Lankan side of the sea). Indian Defense Minister told upper house of the parliament in 2007 that Sri Lankan Navy has shot and killed 77 Tamil Nadu fishermen between 1991 and April 2007. Some others estimate the death count higher. For example, the Tamil newspaper Dinamani July 16, 2008 issue reported that approximately 250 Tamil Nadu fishermen were killed. For the purposes of this article, we take the death count at 77 as given by the Indian government. Indian Defense Minister did not say how many were injured in the shootings. Even if Tamil Nadu fishermen fished or wandered into Sri Lankan side of the sea, international laws do not permit shootings; they may be arrested and tried in court.

Tamil Nadu Chief Ministers Karunanidhi and Jeyalalithaa have written to Indian Prime Ministers many times asking them to protect Tamil Nadu fishermen. Indian Prime Ministers Gujral, Vajpayee, Manmohan Singh, Modi have all promised to stop the shootings. Yet shootings continue to this day. Indian Navy is over a hundred times stronger than Sri Lanka's. Indian Navy ships stand near Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu) and Tamil Nadu fishermen have been shot and sometimes killed just a few miles from Rameswaram. Are Indian army, navy and air force only for the protection of northern India? Why are we paying taxes to the Indian government?

Some Indian government apologists say, "If Indian government pressures Sri Lanka about Tamil Nadu fishermen killings, Sri Lanka would support Pakistan and China, and that would be detrimental to India's defense of the northern borders". We cannot accept this argument. We cannot sacrifice the lives of Tamil Nadu fishermen for the defense of northern borders. Is Tamil life cheap?

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa told Indian Foreign Secretary in 2011: "Incidents of apprehension and assault of fishermen belonging to Tamil Nadu by the Sri Lankan navy should be viewed not as an assault on Tamil fishermen, but as an assault on Indian citizens and should be viewed as an act of provocation and aggression against India by Sri Lanka, similar to firing across the borders of India by neighbours such as Pakistan and China" (Times of India, October 10, 2011).

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## **11.**

### **Current Dark Days of Tamil Nadu**

If we are to say that it has been Dark Days for Tamil Nadu starting from about 1333, the days from 1947 to today are Deep Dark Days.

There is a major difference between British rule that preceded the current Hindi-supremacist rule. British rulers plundered our wealth; Hindi rulers not only plunder our wealth but also attempt to destroy and denigrate our Tamil language, culture, heritage and history. British did not attempt to destroy and denigrate Tamil. Instead British and European scholars brought the greatness of Thirukural to the attention of the world without interference from British rulers. Current Indian government, on the other hand, tries to hide Tamil culture, language and ancient past from the world (see Sections 10.10 to 10.13).

Although British rulers did not attempt to destroy and denigrate Tamil, they were yet alien rulers and we were their subjects. That was why we fought against British rule. Maruthu Pandiyar in the early years of British conquest to V.O. Chidamparamanar, Thirupur Kumaran, Rajaji and Kamaraj in the later years of British rulers are examples of Tamil resistance to British rule.

Those who thought that people of Tamil Nadu would have the right to decide all matters internal to Tamil Nadu in the new, post-British India were disappointed. They did not expect full-fledged Hindi imposition, making Hindi people first class citizens and the rest third class citizens. You can read the impact of Hindi imposition on non-Hindis in Reference 4.

Those who thought that the days of economic plunder of Tamil Nadu has ended, had a rude awakening that thousands of crores of Rupees are transferred from Tamil Nadu to Hindi states year after year for the past 70 years (1 crore = 10 million). They did not expect that millions of Hindi migrants would come to Tamil Nadu seeking work and create unemployment for our own workers. They did not even dream that Sri Lankan Navy would shoot, injure and even kill Tamil Nadu fishermen and Indian government would do nothing effective stop it.

After the end of British rule, Hindis became first class citizens and Tamils became third class citizens. It is like falling from the frying pan into burning fire. If we are to say that it has been Dark Days for Tamil Nadu starting from about 1333 to 1947, the days from 1947 to today are Deep Dark Days. The current situation MUST change. State Government of Tamil Nadu must have the authority to make all decisions relating to the internal affairs of Tamil Nadu without interference from Indian government. Tax rate setting, tax collection and distribution of tax funds for projects must be under state control. State would send a fraction of its taxes to Indian government--all states must pay the same fraction. Tamil Nadu must control the inflow of Hindi migrants into Tamil Nadu as to number of migrants allowed and required qualifications to enter Tamil Nadu.

Unless these measures are enacted, the current Dark Days of Tamil Nadu would continue. There would be no dawn; not even a little moonlight.

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